

stage for the era of modern human rights activism, H. Res. 106 would honor this significant contribution to United States history.

(4) We expect that the United States would not permit foreign governments to intrude on its own legislative process. We also expect that the U.S. government would not be influenced by threats to close American military bases or cut off sales of military hardware, especially when that pressure comes from a country with a deeply disturbing human rights record today, including violence and repressive measures against writers, minorities, intellectuals, and scholars.

(5) As crimes of genocide continue to plague the world, Turkey's policy of denying the Armenian Genocide gives license to those who perpetrate genocide everywhere. Just as we would not sanction denying the Holocaust, we cannot give credence to Turkey's falsification of the facts of 1915. Denial is the final stage of genocide, as it seeks to demonize the victims and rehabilitate the perpetrators.

We believe that it is in the interest of the Turkish people and their future as proud participants in the international democratic community to acknowledge the responsibility of a previous government for the genocide of the Armenian people, just as the German government has done in the case of the Holocaust.

We would be happy to meet with you in person, and would gladly supply you with the scholarly evidence that has led to the unanimous resolution of the International Association of Genocide Scholars that the Turkish massacre of over one million Armenians from 1915 to 1918 was a crime of genocide.

Sincerely,

ISRAEL CHARNY, PH.D.,
President, International Association of
Genocide Scholars.

GREGORY H. STANTON, J.D., PH.D.,
Vice President, International Association of
Genocide Scholars.

I would say, if I could quote some sections of that letter, in that letter the scholars state their position clearly, noting that the Armenian genocide "is proven by foreign office records of the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia and even of Turkey's World War I allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary."

They also say: "Just as we would not sanction denying the Holocaust, we cannot give credence to Turkey's falsification of the facts of 1915; denial is the final stage of genocide." They are unanimous in their findings.

Mr. Speaker, the American people and this Congress should deserve a full and truthful account of the role of the Turkish Government in denying the Armenian genocide. Congress should be allowed to reaffirm that genocide was orchestrated by the Ottoman Empire in 1915 to exterminate its Armenian citizens.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HODES). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' HEALTH, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCHWARTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow this body will vote on the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health, and Iraq Accountability Act.

After 4 years of failed policies from the Bush administration, and absolutely no accountability demanded by the previous Republican-led Congresses, this body has the opportunity to say enough. We say enough to continuing the open-ended war with no end in sight. We say enough to giving away hard-earned taxpayer dollars to the Iraqi Government without any real mechanisms for accountability. We say enough to ignoring the will of the American people who have overwhelmingly demanded a new direction and a new course in Iraq.

This week the Iraq war will enter its fifth year. It has already eclipsed the length of the U.S. participation in the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. More than 3,200 American heroes have paid the ultimate sacrifice, while more than 24,000 have been injured, and tens of thousands of Iraqis have been killed, just as millions have been fleeing the country.

Despite this immense sacrifice and hardship, the President's war strategy has not made the Middle East or our Nation safer.

Today the Middle East is less stable than it was in 2003. An Iraq in chaos and an emboldened Iran has fundamentally changed the balance of power in the region in a way that undermines the security of our Nation and the entire region. The war has caused us to lose sight of the mission in Afghanistan where the Taliban is resurgent and Osama bin Laden, Ayman al Zawahiri, and other key members of al Qaeda, the terrorist group responsible for killing 3,000 Americans on 9/11, are still at large and still plotting against us.

Our own National Intelligence Estimate tells us that the war in Iraq estimate has increased, and the threat of terrorism globally has increased.

Just 2 weeks ago, I visited Iraq, and I met with the brave servicemen and -women. I deeply admire these individuals and their families. Out of pure selflessness and a profound love of our Nation, they have volunteered to serve. They do so humbly and honorably.

The Bush administration owes them a strategy that is worthy of their sacrifice. When they failed to provide it, we must hold them accountable. Our Nation can no longer afford the failed policies put forward by President Bush.

We must step forward, abandon the rubber-stamp policies of the previous Congress, and reassert our place as a coequal branch of government. Tomorrow we will have the opportunity to meet this obligation and put the administration on notice. The days of writing a blank check for the mistaken and mismanaged war are over.

When we send our men and women into Iraq without the proper equipment, training and rest, as the President continues to, we expose them to greater danger. This legislation we will vote on tomorrow recognizes this fact by requiring the President to honor his own standards and the standards the Department of Defense has set for the troop readiness, training and equipment.

When our own wounded warriors return to the United States, we as a Nation have an obligation to ensure that they are taken care of. There is simply no excuse for the deplorable conditions of neglect that our soldiers have faced at Walter Reed medical center. That is a national disgrace.

This legislation addresses our veterans health care crisis by adding \$1.7 billion to treat the growing number of veterans, to address the maintenance backlogs at the VA health care facilities, and to ensure a significant level of personnel to deliver quality services. This legislation recognizes that the only solution in Iraq is political and diplomatic.

As General Petraeus, the top military commander in Iraq, has said: "There was no military solution to a problem like that in Iraq."

This legislation will hold the Iraqi Government accountable by requiring them to meet their own benchmarks for political progress.

We are putting them on notice that they must take the political steps necessary to achieve stability, including disarming the militia and a plan that equally shares oil revenues around the country.

We are also sending a strong clear message to the Bush administration that they must engage in tough diplomacy needed to ensure that Iraq's neighbors do not continue to undermine the efforts of our troops or they undermine the hope for stability in Iraq.

Most significantly, this legislation will lead to the responsible end of our military engagement in Iraq through a phased redeployment of U.S. combat troops.

Instead of continuing the President's policy of open-ended commitment, strategically redeploying combat troops from Iraq, while maintaining a small presence to train Iraqi troops and engage in counterterrorism operations is the most responsible strategy in Iraq.

We will move our troops from direct engagement. It will require the Iraqis to protect Iraqis, and it will allow our Nation to be better prepared for other contingencies affecting the security of our Nation.